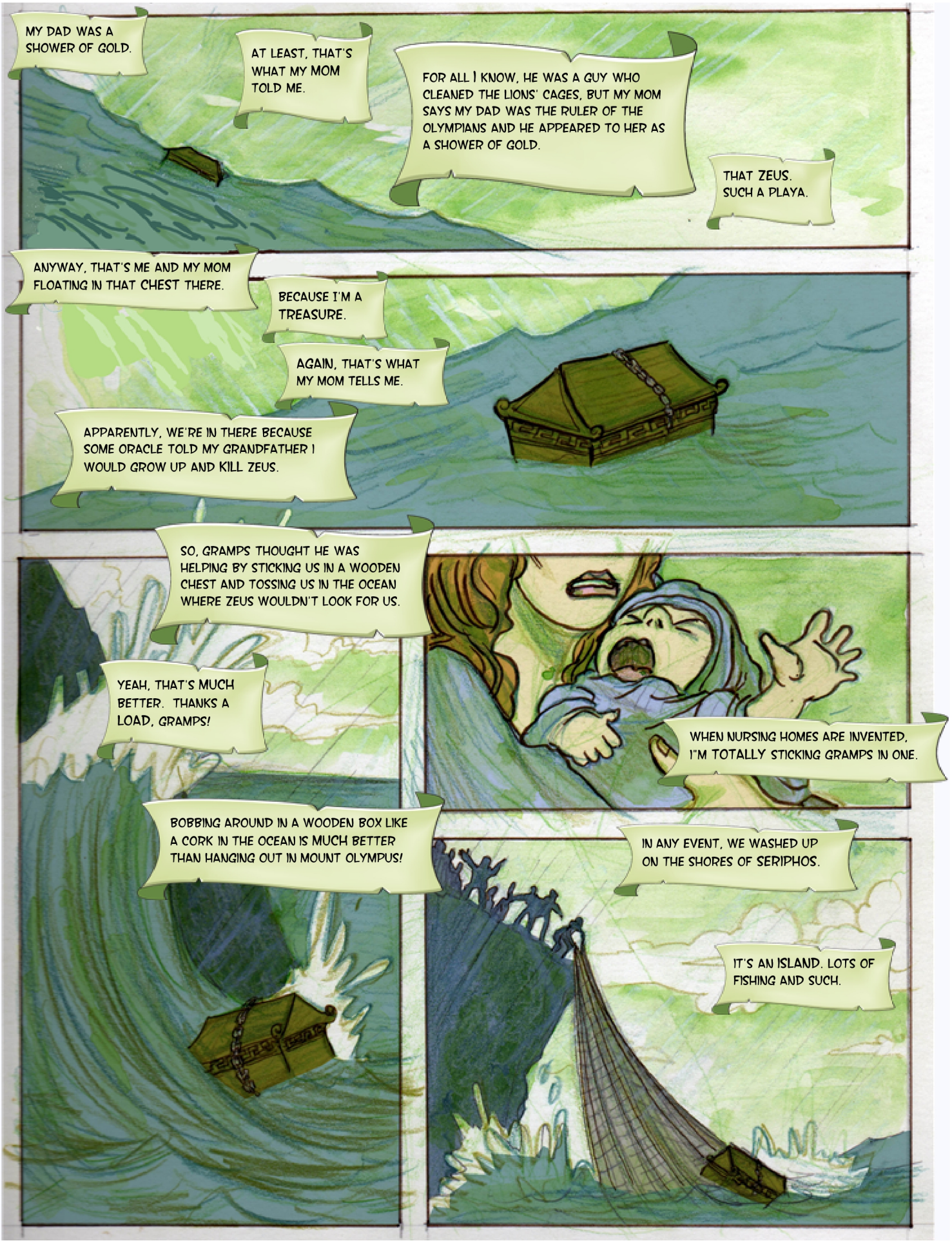
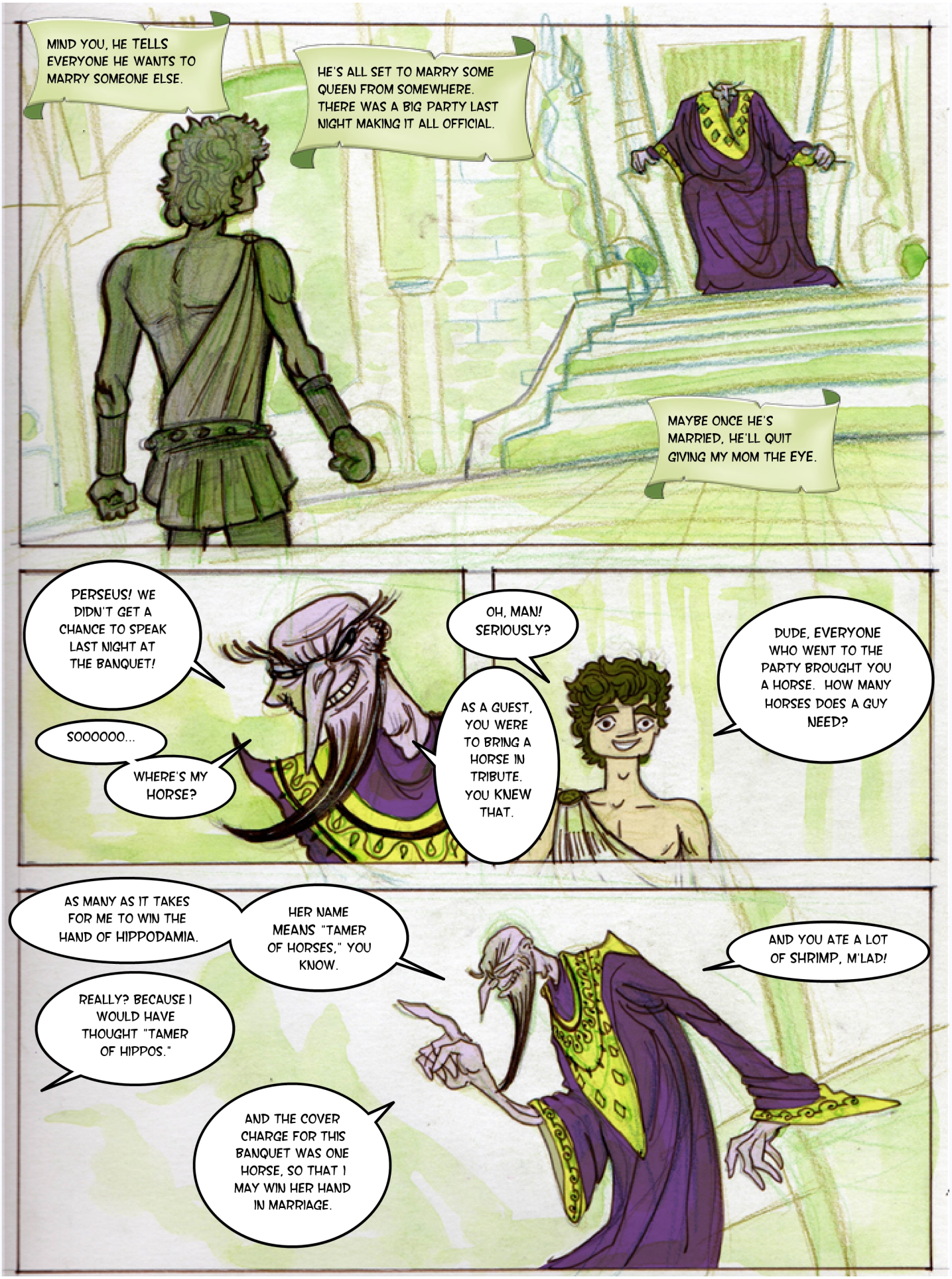
MY DATE WITH MEDUSA

A.D. SHADDOX GABE OSTLEY RU


MY DAD WAS A SHOWER OF GOLD.
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT MY MOM TOLD ME.
FOR ALL I KNOW, HE WAS A GUY WHO CLEANED THE LIONS' CAGES, BUT MY MOM SAYS MY DAD WAS THE RULER OF THE OLYMPIANS AND HE APPEARED TO HER AS A SHOWER OF GOLD.
THAT ZEUS. SUCH A PLAYA.
ANYWAY, THAT'S ME AND MY MOM FLOATING IN THAT CHEST THERE.
BECAUSE I'M A TREASURE.
AGAIN, THAT'S WHAT MY MOM TELLS ME.
APPARENTLY, WE'RE IN THERE BECAUSE SOME ORACLE TOLD MY GRANDFATHER I WOULD GROW UP AND KILL ZEUS.
SO, GRAMPS THOUGHT HE WAS HELPING BY STICKING US IN A WOODEN CHEST AND TOSSING US IN THE OCEAN WHERE ZEUS WOULDN'T LOOK FOR US.
YEAH, THAT'S MUCH BETTER. THANKS A LOAD, GRAMPS!
WHEN NURSING HOMES ARE INVENTED, I"M TOTALLY STICKING GRAMPS IN ONE.
BOBBING AROUND IN A WOODEN BOX LIKE A CORK IN THE OCEAN IS MUCH BETTER THAN HANGING OUT IN MOUNT OLYMPUS!
IN ANY EVENT, WE WASHED UP ON THE SHORES OF SERIPHOS.
IT'S AN ISLAND. LOTS OF FISHING AND SUCH.

THE GUY WITH THE MUSCLES THERE IS DICTYS.
HIS NAME MEANS "FISHING NET." NO KIDDING.
I GUESS IF YOUR PARENTS NAME YOU "FISHING NET," YOU CAN SAFELY ASSUME YOUR OCCUPATIONAL PATH HAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED FOR YOU.
ANYWAY, THIS WAS ACTUALLY A PRETTY GOOD DAY FOR DICTYS.
YOU DON'T USUALLY MEET A LOT OF WOMEN WHEN YOU'RE OUT CASTING NETS, AND INTERNET DATING WAS STILL A FEW THOUSAND YEARS AWAY.

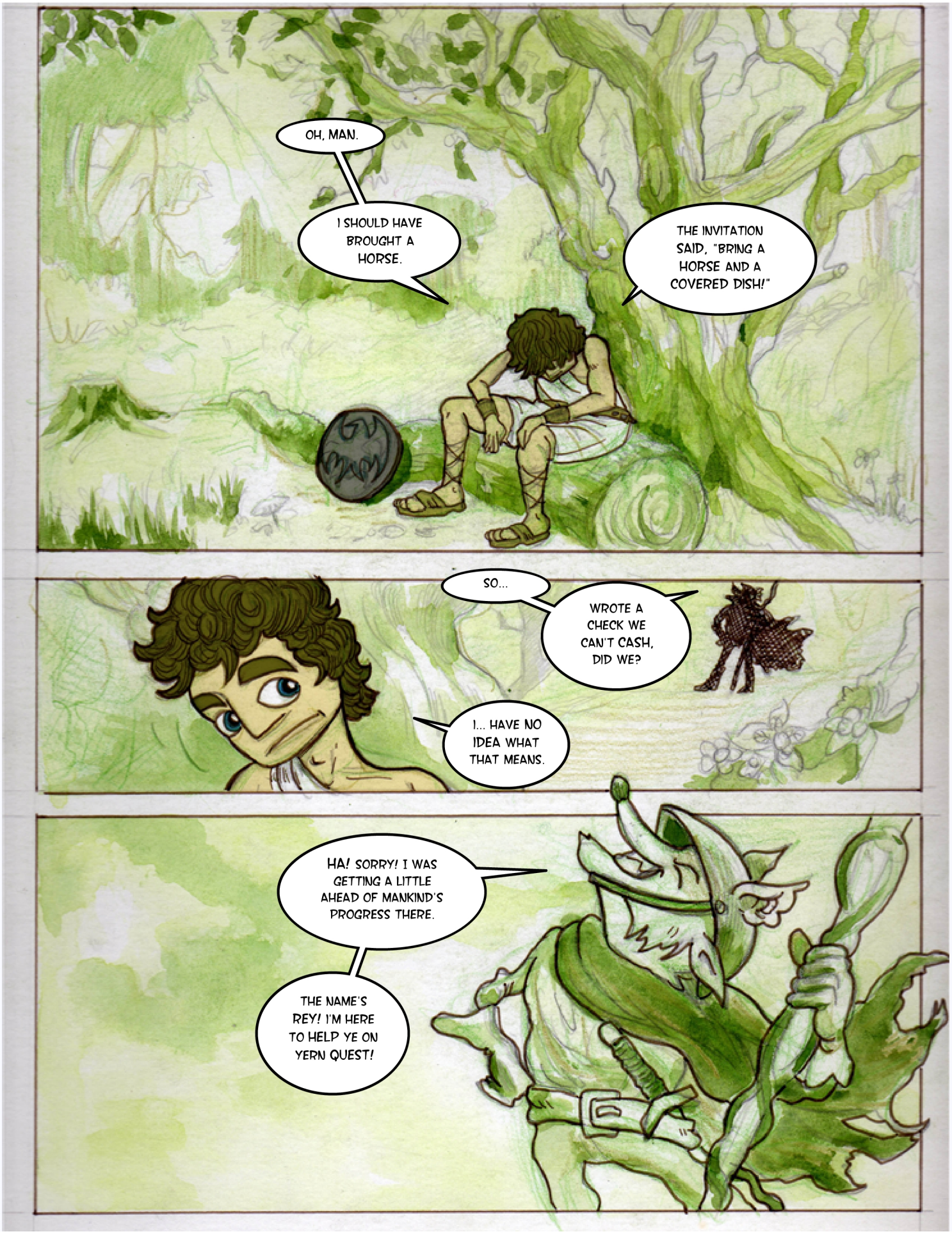
DICTYS RAISED ME LIKE A DAD.
AND BY THAT, I MEAN A DAD WHO WOULDN'T TRY TO KILL ME.
THIS GUY HERE, WHO'S TWIRLING HIS BEARD IN A MENACING FASHION? HE'S DICTY'S BROTHER, THE KING OF THE ISLAND.
I CALL HIM "POLY-D."
HIS REAL NAME IS POLYDECTES, SO I THOUGHT HE'D PREFER POLY-D. I KNOW I WOULD.
HIS NAME MEANS "WELCOMES MANY."
I GUESS IT'S A GOOD THING HIS NAME DOESN'T MEAN "KILL WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHO WANDER INTO OUR WATERS" OR THINGS WOULD HAVE BEEN ROUGH FOR MOM AND ME WHEN WE FIRST SHOWED UP.
TO TELL THE TRUTH, I THINK HE'S GOT A THING FOR MY MOM.


MIND YOU, HE TELLS EVERYONE HE WANTS TO MARRY SOMEONE ELSE.
HE'S ALL SET TO MARRY SOME QUEEN FROM SOMEWHERE. THERE WAS A BIG PARTY LAST NIGHT MAKING IT ALL OFFICIAL.
MAYBE ONCE HE'S MARRIED, HE'LL QUIT GIVING MY MOM THE EYE.
PERSEUS! WE DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO SPEAK LAST NIGHT AT THE BANQUET!
SOOOOOO...
WHERE'S MY HORSE?
OH, MAN! SERIOUSLY?
AS A GUEST, YOU WERE TO BRING A HORSE IN TRIBUTE. YOU KNEW THAT.
DUDE, EVERYONE WHO WENT TO THE PARTY BROUGHT YOU A HORSE. HOW MANY HORSES DOES A GUY NEED?
AS MANY AS IT TAKES FOR ME TO WIN THE HAND OF HIPPODAMIA.
HER NAME MEANS "TAMER OF HORSES," YOU KNOW.
REALLY? BECAUSE I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT "TAMER OF HIPPOS."
AND THE COVER CHARGE FOR THIS BANQUET WAS ONE HORSE, SO THAT I MAY WIN HER HAND IN MARRIAGE.
AND YOU ATE A LOT OF SHRIMP, M'LAD!

IN MY DEFENSE, IT WAS BACON-WRAPPED!
THAT IT WAS.
AND YOU WERE SANS HORSE.
NOT GOING TO LET IT GO, ARE YOU?
NOPE.
ALL RIGHT, POLY-D. I'LL MAKE IT UP TO YOU.
WHATEVER YOU WANT. JUST NAME IT!
WHATEVER I WANT?!!! MWAH - HA- HA- HA- HAAAAAAA!
WHATEVER I WANT?!!!
WELL, WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY, YOU MAKE ME HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS!
TOO LATE. NO TAKESIES - BACKSIES.

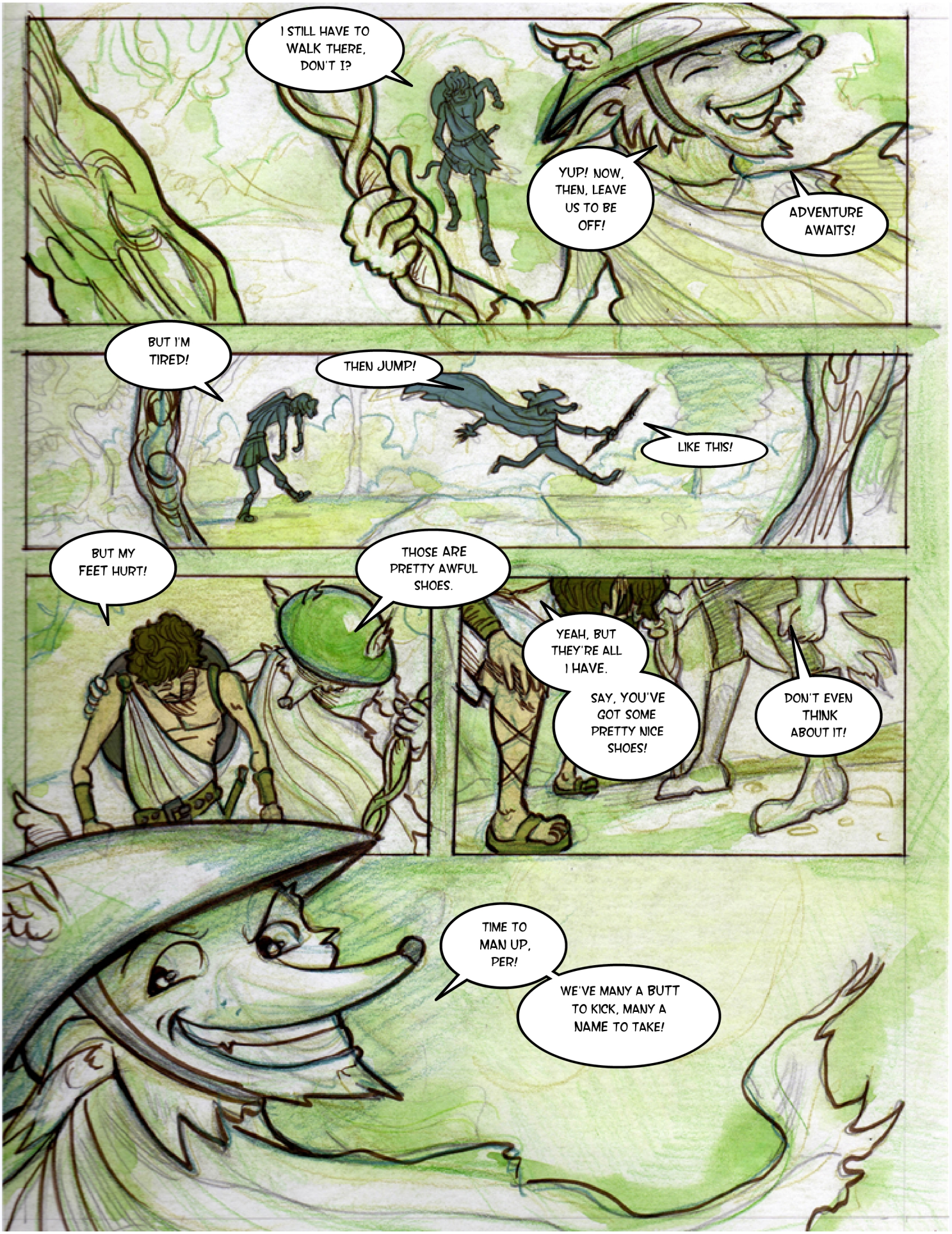
BRING ME...
the head of MEDUSA.
AW, MAN!
I WAS THINKING YOU'D WANT A FOOT RUB OR SOMETHING!
NOPE. HEAD OF THE GORGON.
AND DON'T COME BACK UNTIL THE DEED IS DONE!
SLAM!
HA
ha
Heh

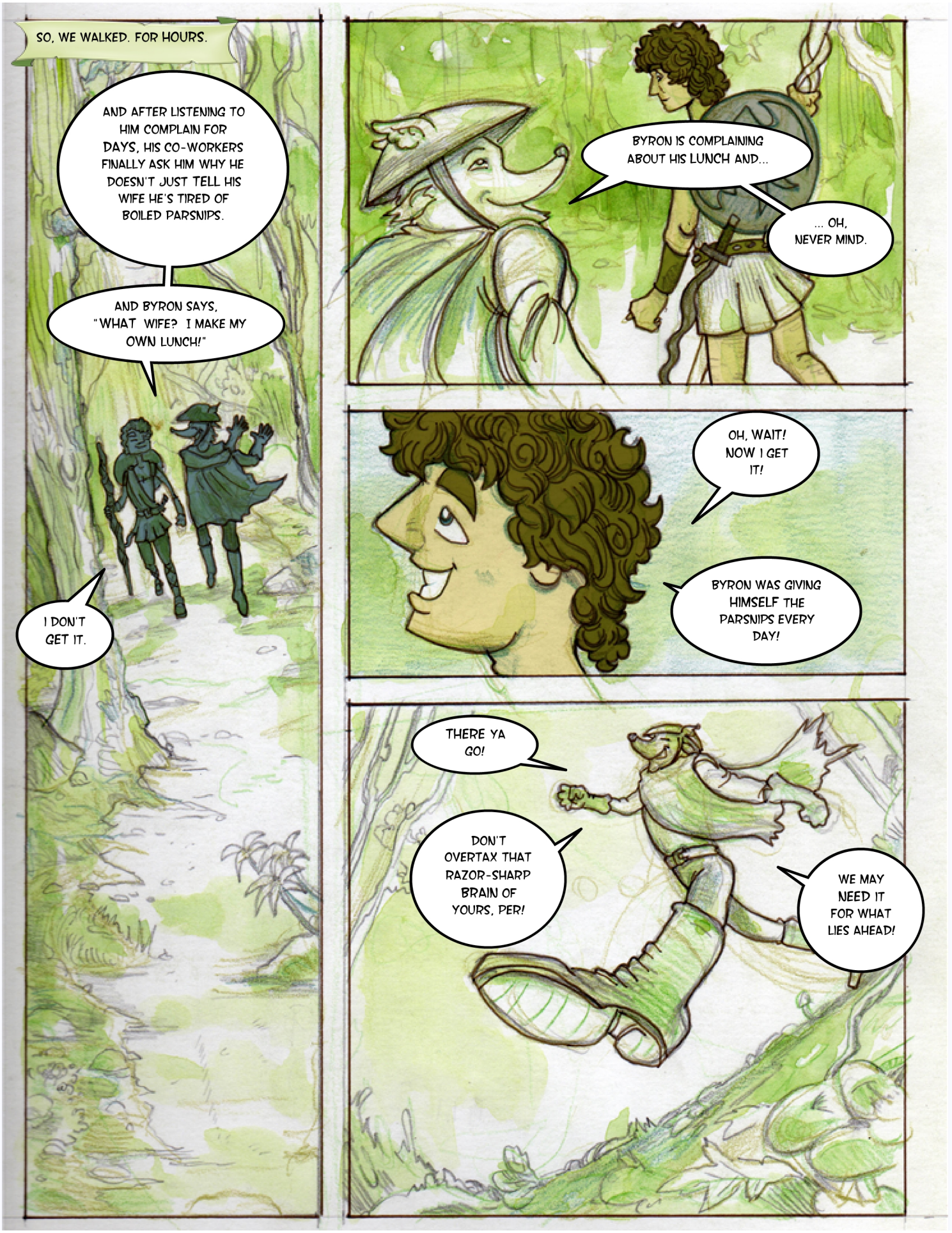
BEFORE SHE BECAME THE LADY WITH SNAKES FOR HAIR, MEDUSA WAS A NORMAL GIRL.
HER ONLY FLAW IS THAT SHE WAS WHAT YOU WOULD CALL A "SOCIAL CLIMBER."
SHE WAS VERY PROUD OF HER BEAUTIFUL HAIR, WHICH SHE USED TO SEDUCE POSEIDON.
WHICH WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SUCH A BIG DEAL, IF THEY HADN'T HAD THEIR RENDEZVOUS IN ATHENA'S TEMPLE.
ATHENA IS KNOWN FOR BEING THE GODDESS OF WISDOM, SO THEY PROBABLY THOUGHT, "WELL, WHAT'S ATHENA GOING TO DO IF WE DISRESPECT HER TEMPLE? GIVE US A GEOMETRY LESSON?"
THEY APPARENTLY FORGOT THAT ATHENA WAS ALSO THE GODDESS OF WARFARE.
WHOOPS!
LONG STORY SHORT, MEDUSA'S CROWNING GLORY GETS TURNED INTO SNAKES...
AND SHE TURNS YOU INTO STONE IF YOU'RE STUPID ENOUGH TO GET INTO A STARE-DOWN WITH HER.

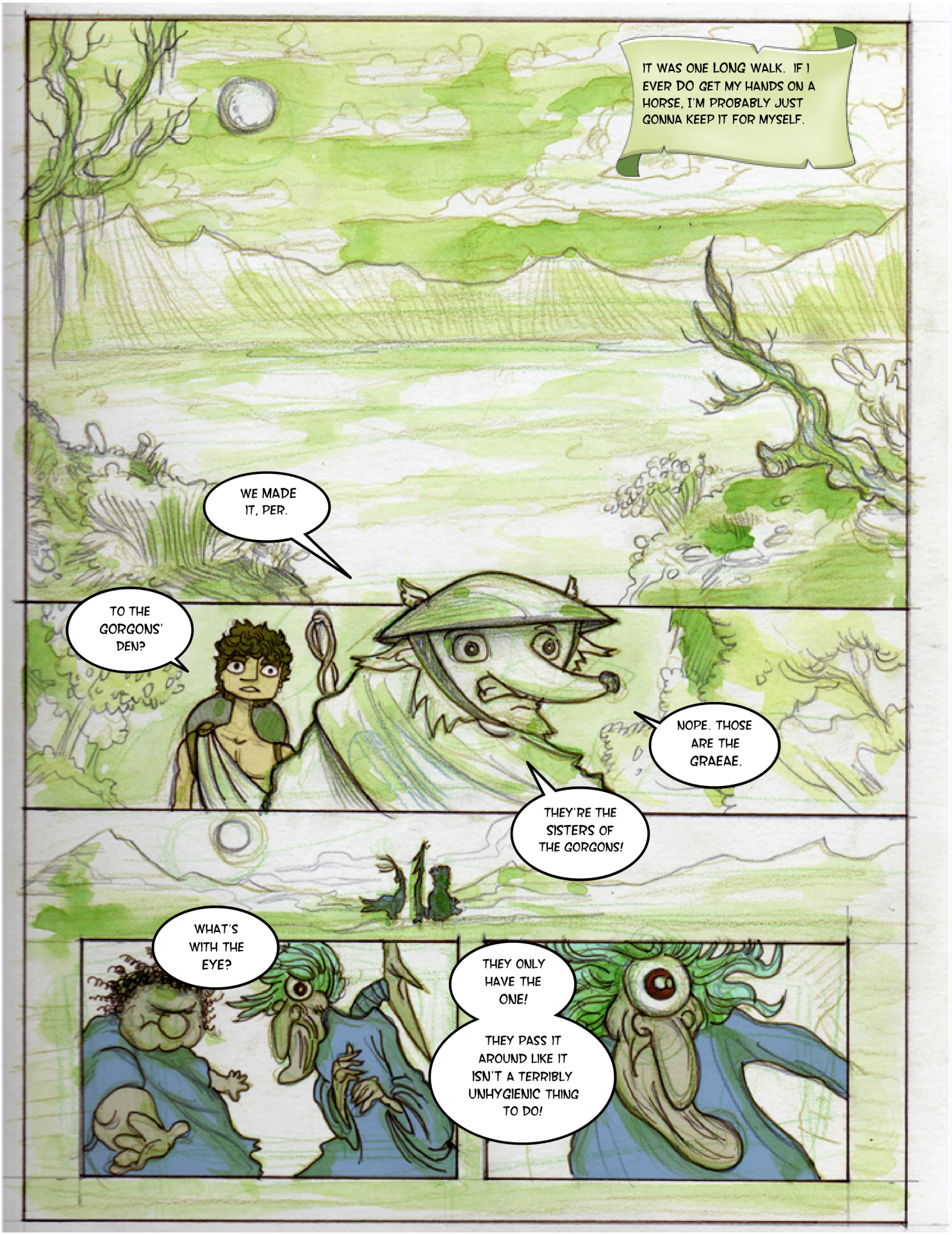

OH, MAN.
I SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT A HORSE.
THE INVITATION SAID, "BRING A HORSE AND A COVERED DISH!"
SO...
WROTE A CHECK WE CAN'T CASH, DID WE?
I... HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THAT MEANS.
HA! SORRY! I WAS GETTING A LITTLE AHEAD OF MANKIND'S PROGRESS THERE.
THE NAME'S REY! I'M HERE TO HELP YE ON YERN QUEST!

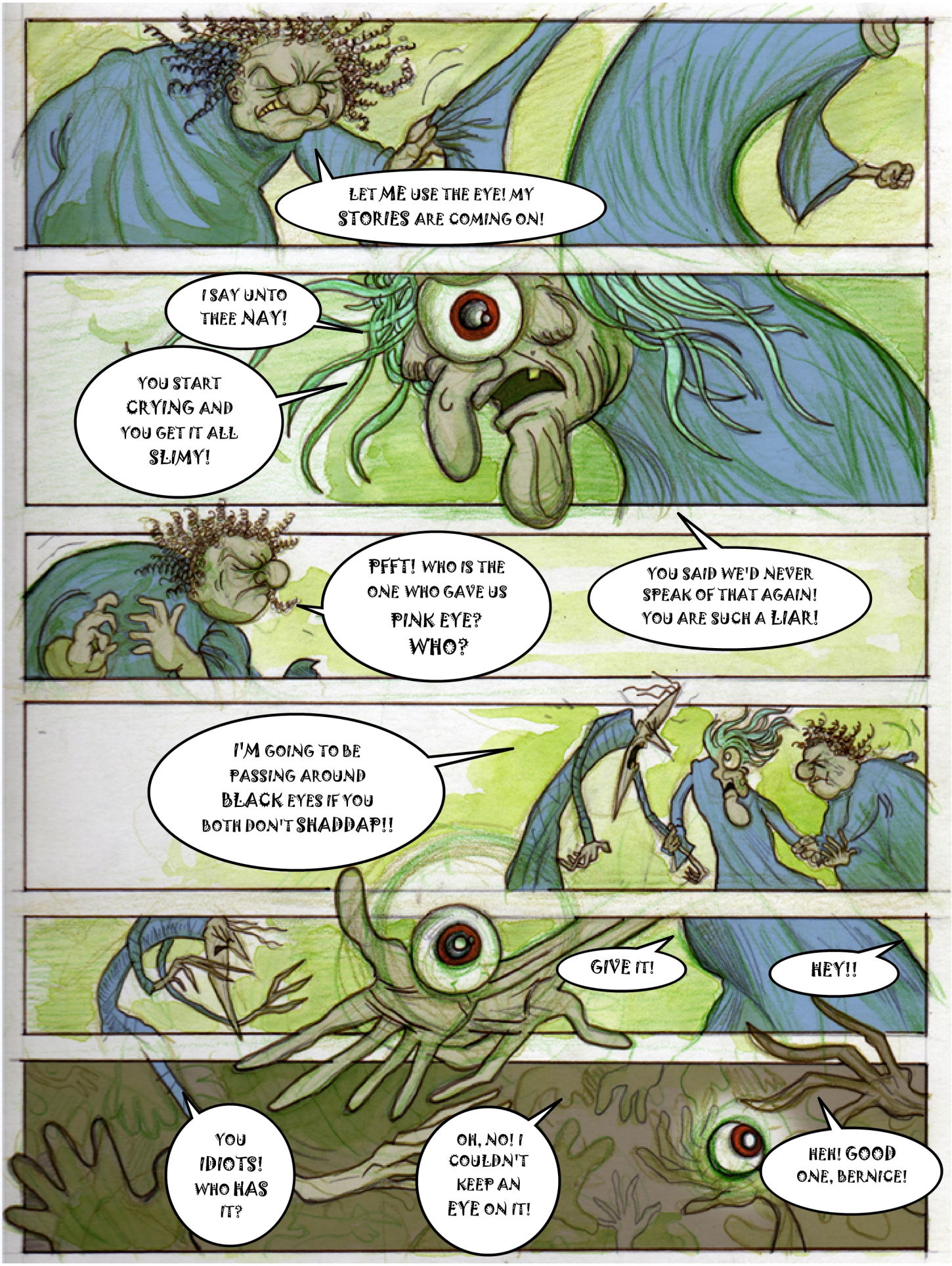
REALLY? HOW COOL !!
HEY.
ARE YOU ZEUS?
NO, FELLA! I'M A FOX! SEE THE TAIL?
THAT DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING. ZEUS APPEARED TO MY MOM AS A GOLDEN SHOWER!
YOU MEAN SHOWER OF GOLD?
THERE'S A DIFFERENCE?
I LIKE YOU, KID! YOU MAKE ME LAUGH.
GLAD I'M GOOD FOR SOMETHING. IT SEEMS I'M ALWAYS GETTING THINGS WRONG. THAT'S WHY I'M ON THIS STUPID QUEST IN THE FIRST PLACE !
WELL, THIS COULD BE THE CHANCE TO PROVE YOU CAN DO SOMETHING AWESOME!
COME ON, PER! IT'LL BE FUN!
YEAH. CAN'T WAIT.
OR YOU MIGHT DIE! EITHER WAY, PROBLEM SOLVED.
YOU DON'T HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE WITH "PEP TALKS," DO YOU, REY?

FUN, EH?
OR YOU COULD DIE! DON'T FORGET THAT!
BUT HERE'S A SHIELD! THAT MIGHT HELP!
OKAY. LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS.
NICE SHIELD.
IT'S A GIFT FROM ATHENA! I GUESS SHE'S STILL CHEESED AT MEDUSA.
AND, JUST FOR FUN, HERE'S A SWORD!
COOL ! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU GAVE ME A SWORD!
LOANED. I LOANED YOU A SWORD.
I'M NOT A CHARITY, PAL.

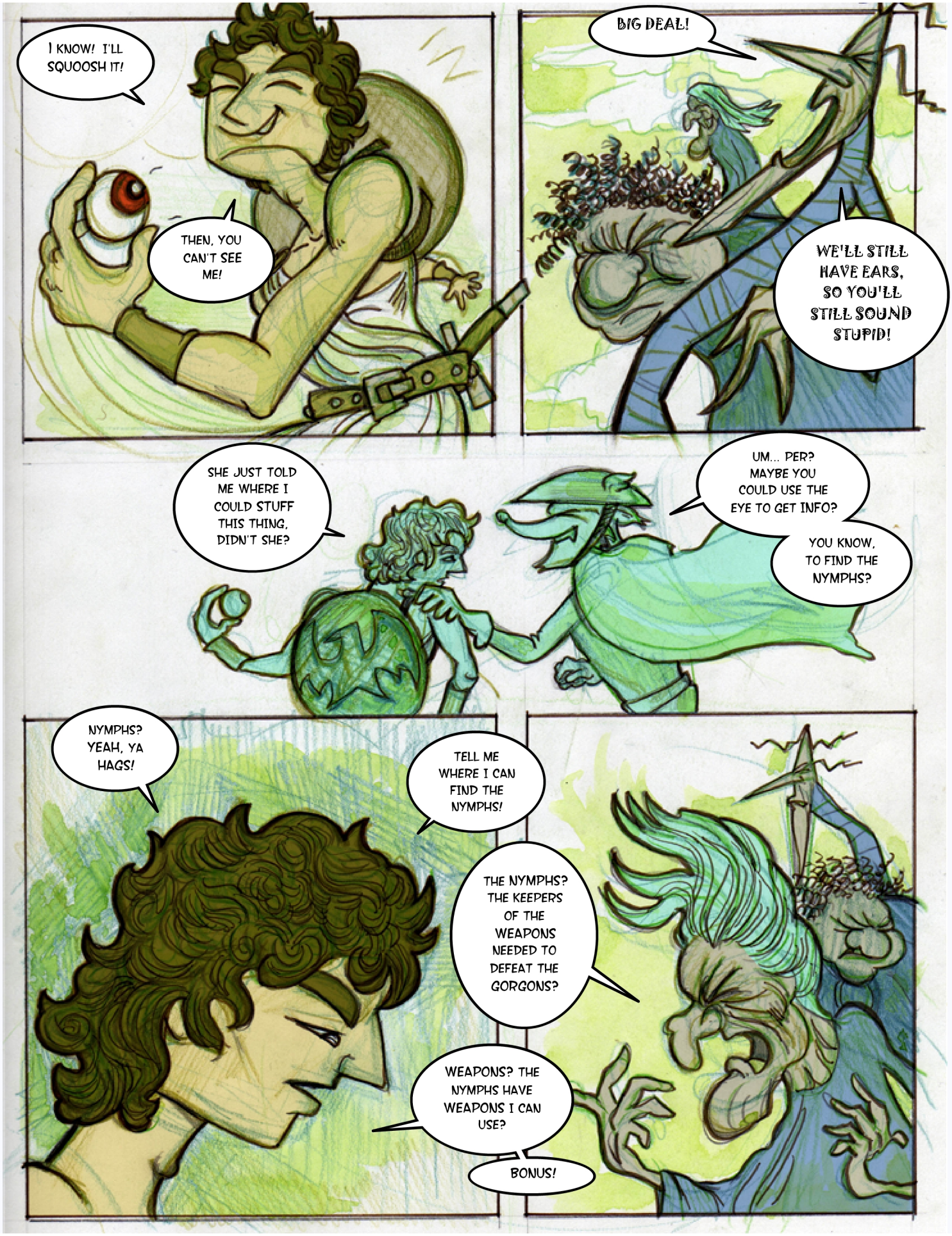

I STILL HAVE TO WALK THERE, DON'T I?
YUP! NOW, THEN, LEAVE US TO BE OFF!
ADVENTURE AWAITS!
BUT I'M TIRED!
THEN JUMP!
LIKE THIS!
BUT MY FEET HURT!
THOSE ARE PRETTY AWFUL SHOES.
YEAH, BUT THEY'RE ALL I HAVE.
SAY, YOU'VE GOT SOME PRETTY NICE SHOES!
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!
TIME TO MAN UP, PER!
WE'VE MANY A BUTT TO KICK, MANY A NAME TO TAKE!


SO, WE WALKED. FOR HOURS.
AND AFTER LISTENING TO HIM COMPLAIN FOR DAYS, HIS CO-WORKERS FINALLY ASK HIM WHY HE DOESN'T JUST TELL HIS WIFE HE'S TIRED OF BOILED PARSNIPS.
AND BYRON SAYS, "WHAT WIFE? I MAKE MY OWN LUNCH!"
I DON'T GET IT.
BYRON IS COMPLAINING ABOUT HIS LUNCH AND...
... OH, NEVER MIND.
OH, WAIT! NOW I GET IT!
BYRON WAS GIVING HIMSELF THE PARSNIPS EVERY DAY!
THERE YA GO!
DON'T OVERTAX THAT RAZOR-SHARP BRAIN OF YOURS, PER!
WE MAY NEED IT FOR WHAT LIES AHEAD!


IT WAS ONE LONG WALK. IF I EVER DO GET MY HANDS ON A HORSE, I'M PROBABLY JUST GONNA KEEP IT FOR MYSELF.
WE MADE IT, PER.
TO THE GORGONS' DEN?
NOPE. THOSE ARE THE GRAEAE.
THEY'RE THE SISTERS OF THE GORGONS!
WHAT'S WITH THE EYE?
THEY ONLY HAVE THE ONE!
THEY PASS IT AROUND LIKE IT ISN'T A TERRIBLY UNHYGIENIC THING TO DO!

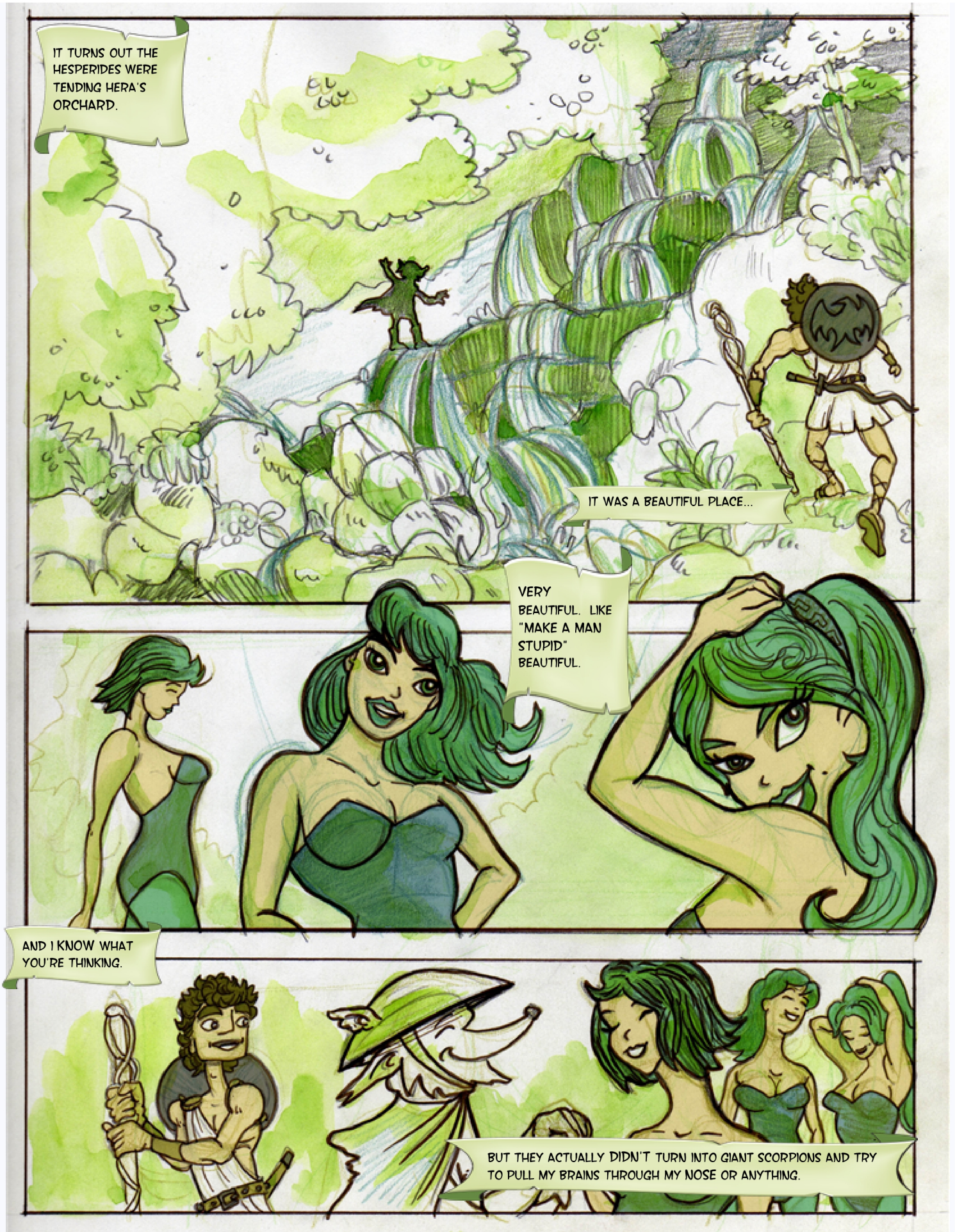

LET ME USE THE EYE! MY STORIES ARE COMING ON!
I SAY UNTO THEE NAY!
YOU START CRYING AND YOU GET IT ALL SLIMY!
PFFT! WHO IS THE ONE WHO GAVE US PINK EYE? WHO?
YOU SAID WE'D NEVER SPEAK OF THAT AGAIN! YOU ARE SUCH A LIAR!
I'M GOING TO BE PASSING AROUND BLACK EYES IF YOU BOTH DON'T SHADDAP!!
GIVE IT!
HEY!!
YOU IDIOTS! WHO HAS IT?
OH, NO! I COULDN'T KEEP AN EYE ON IT!
HEH! GOOD ONE, BERNICE!

FETCH IT, PER!
GO GET IT! GO GET IT!
GONNA GET IT! GONNA GET IT!
GOT IT! I... I...
I'M HOLDING AN EYEBALL.
HOW TOTALLY GROSS.


I KNOW! I'LL SQUOOSH IT!
THEN, YOU CAN'T SEE ME!
BIG DEAL!
WE'LL STILL HAVE EARS, SO YOU'LL STILL SOUND STUPID!
SHE JUST TOLD ME WHERE I COULD STUFF THIS THING, DIDN'T SHE?
UM... PER? MAYBE YOU COULD USE THE EYE TO GET INFO?
YOU KNOW, TO FIND THE NYMPHS?
NYMPHS? YEAH, YA HAGS!
TELL ME WHERE I CAN FIND THE NYMPHS!
THE NYMPHS? THE KEEPERS OF THE WEAPONS NEEDED TO DEFEAT THE GORGONS?
WEAPONS? THE NYMPHS HAVE WEAPONS I CAN USE?
BONUS!

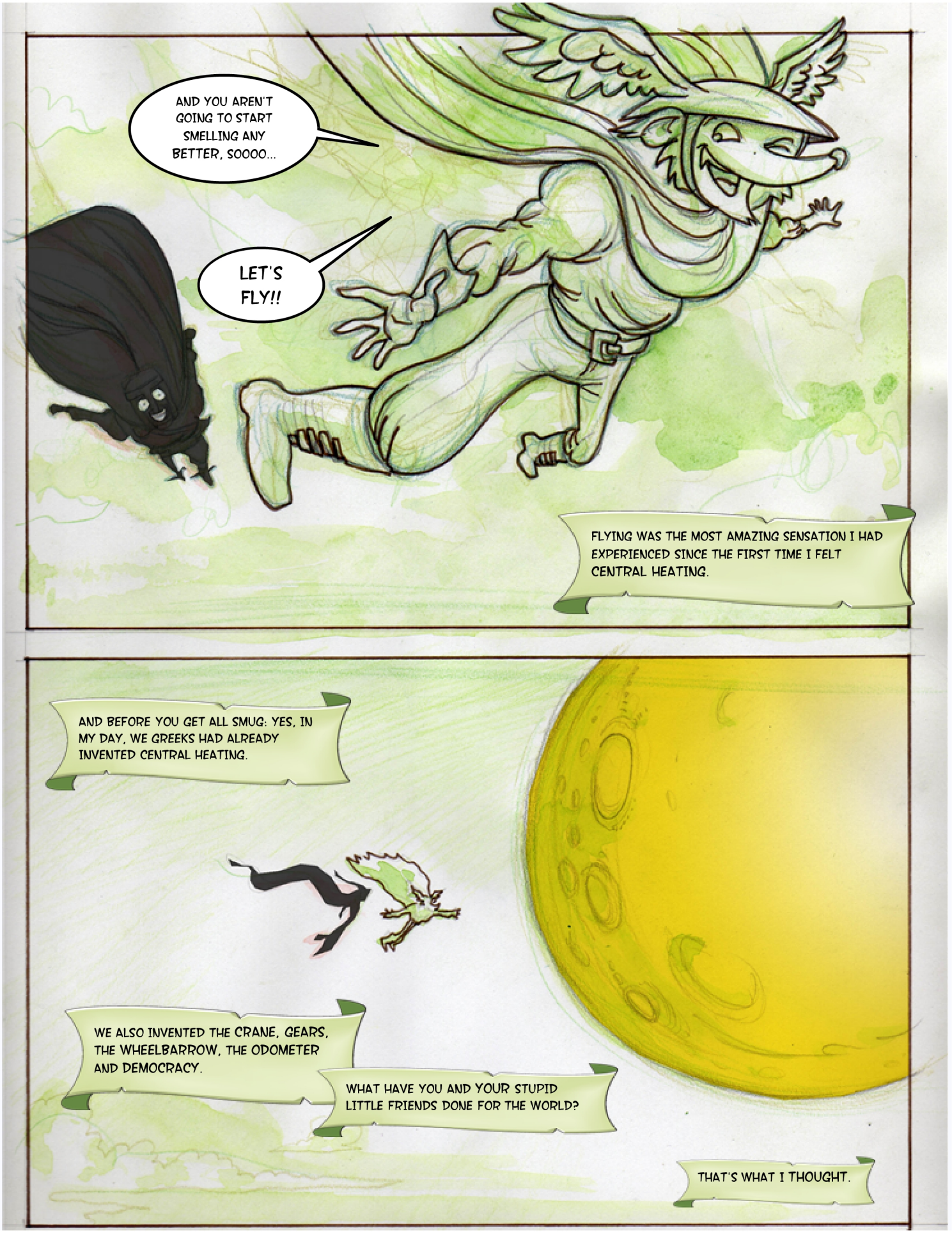
EEP!
DEATH TO THE INTRUDER!
HEY! THAT'S AN AWFUL LOT OF SLAPPING YOU'RE DOING!
DOES THAT USUALLY WORK ON INVADERS?
US? WHAT ABOUT STEALING THE ONLY WORKING EYE OF THREE OLD WOMEN?
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF THERE, SPORT?
. . .
YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M BEING A BULLY.
AND I'M STILL HOLDING AN EYEBALL.
NOW, PER...

I'M SURE WE CAN WORK SOMETHING OUT.
AND SO, AN AGREEMENT CAME ABOUT...
I GOT INFORMATION AS TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE HESPERIDES NYMPHS...
... AND THE SISTERS GOT A FRESHLY-CLEANED EYE.
I LIKE TO TELL EVERYONE I TOSSED THE EYE INTO A LAKE.
IT MAKES ME SOUND TOUGH.


IT TURNS OUT THE HESPERIDES WERE TENDING HERA'S ORCHARD.
IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE...
VERY BEAUTIFUL. LIKE "MAKE A MAN STUPID" BEAUTIFUL.
AND I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING.
BUT THEY ACTUALLY DIDN'T TURN INTO GIANT SCORPIONS AND TRY TO PULL MY BRAINS THROUGH MY NOSE OR ANYTHING.

THEY GAVE ME A KNAPSACK THAT COULD SAFELY HOLD MEDUSA'S HEAD.
AND SOME WINGED SANDALS THEY SAID ONCE BELONGED TO HERMES.
AND APPARENTLY REALLY WANTED TO GO BACK TO HERMES!
FOR SOME REASON, I SEEM TO HAVE A LOT OF SHOE-RELATED ISSUES!
GOTCHA!!

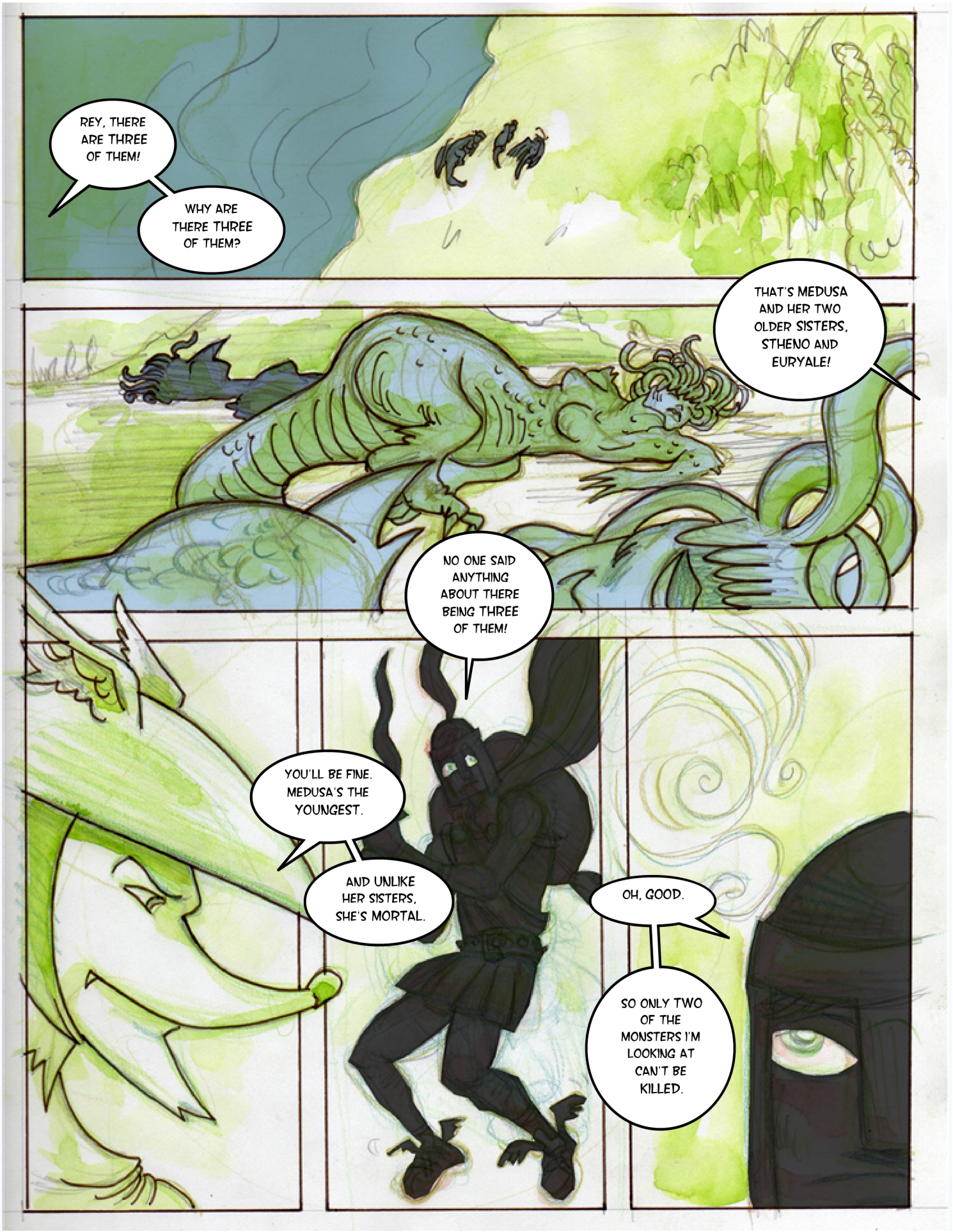
ON THE FEET, PER!
SHOES GO ON THE FEET. TRY TO KEEP UP!
WHEEEEE!
WAY TO IMPRESS THE GIRLS, PER!
HERE.
THIS IS THE HELM OF DARKNESS.
CLUNK!
HEY! IT FITS!
SORTA.
WELL THAT'S JUST NIFTY!
POOF!
I KNOW, RIGHT?
HA! YOU CAN'T SEE ME!
NO, BUT I CAN HEAR YOU AND YOU STILL DON'T SMELL SO GOOD!
HEY!
JUST SAYIN'.

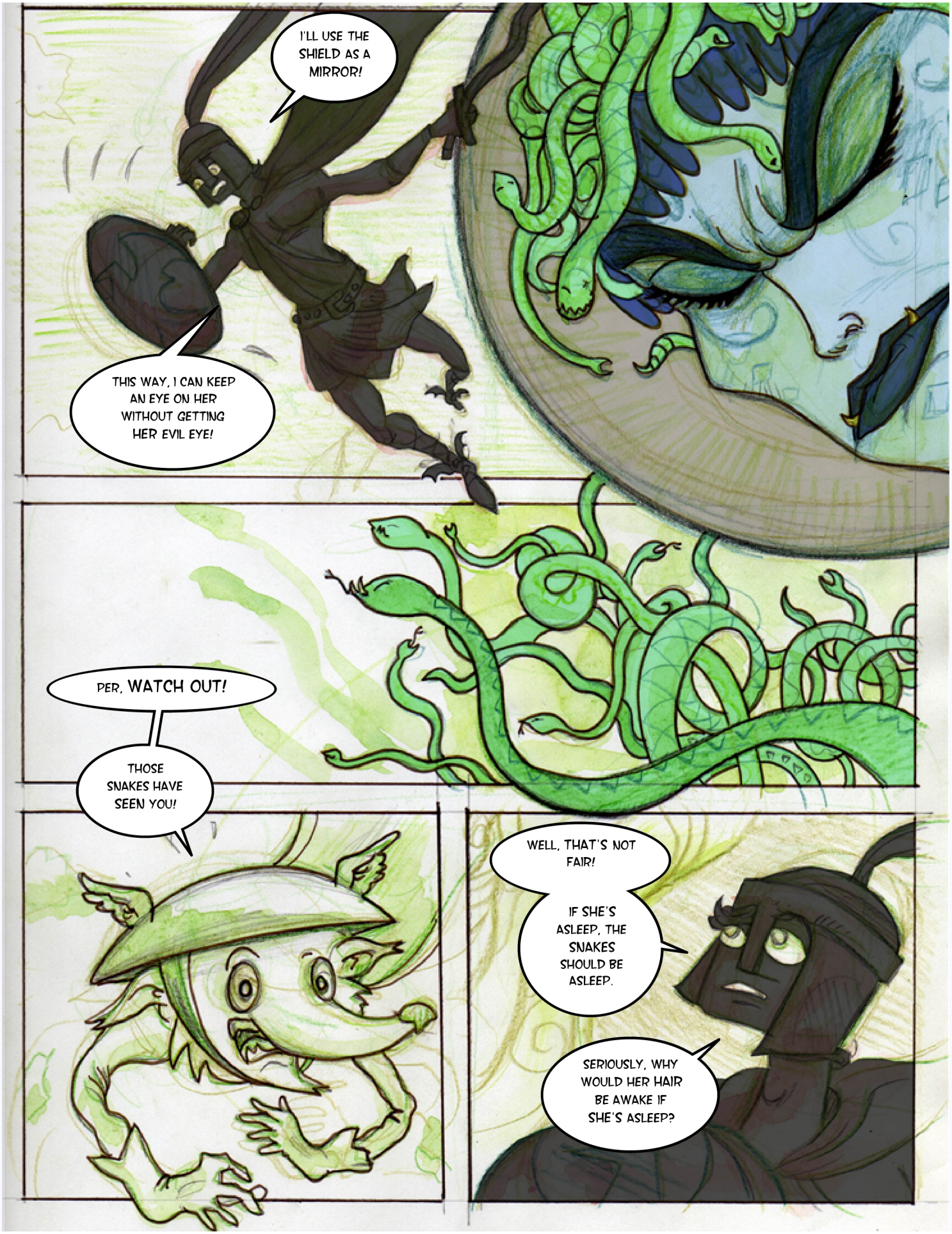

AND YOU AREN'T GOING TO START SMELLING ANY BETTER, SOOOO...
LET'S FLY!!
FLYING WAS THE MOST AMAZING SENSATION I HAD EXPERIENCED SINCE THE FIRST TIME I FELT CENTRAL HEATING.
AND BEFORE YOU GET ALL SMUG: YES, IN MY DAY, WE GREEKS HAD ALREADY INVENTED CENTRAL HEATING.
WE ALSO INVENTED THE CRANE, GEARS, THE WHEELBARROW, THE ODOMETER AND DEMOCRACY.
WHAT HAVE YOU AND YOUR STUPID LITTLE FRIENDS DONE FOR THE WORLD?
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.

I FOUND HER ON THE SICILIAN SIDE OF THE STRAIT OF MESSINA.
IT WAS KNOWN TO BE A PRETTY LIVELY PLACE.
IT WAS BEAUTIFUL.
THEN AGAIN, MOST PLACES ARE FROM A DISTANCE.

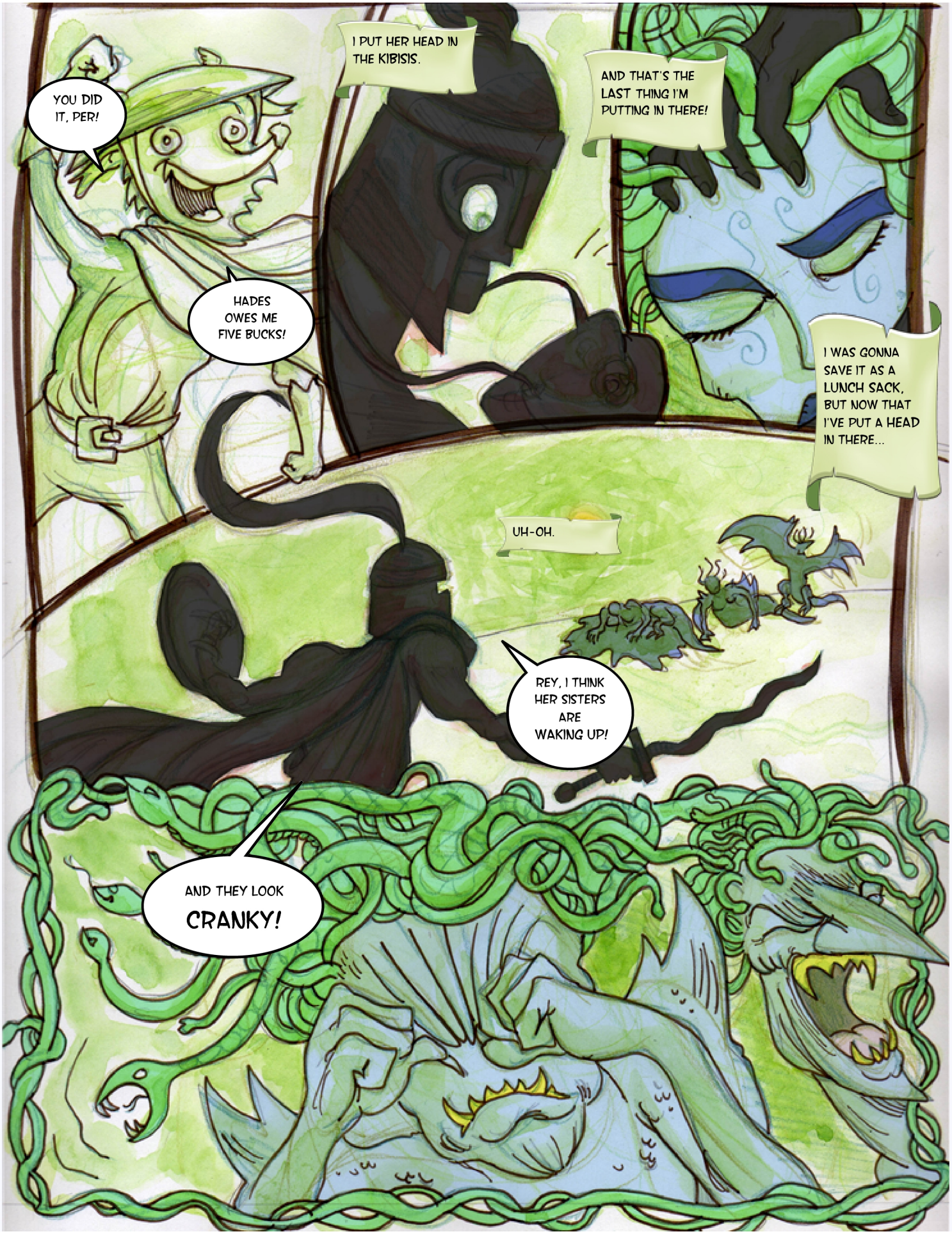
FUNNY PLACE FOR A MONSTER TO HANG OUT.
(WATCH IT, BIRD!)
AGREED. IT LOOKS LIKE A NICE PLACE TO VISIT.
BUT APPEARANCES CAN TRICK YOU.
MEANING?
PUT IT THIS WAY...
DON'T GET TOO CLOSE TO THE WATER

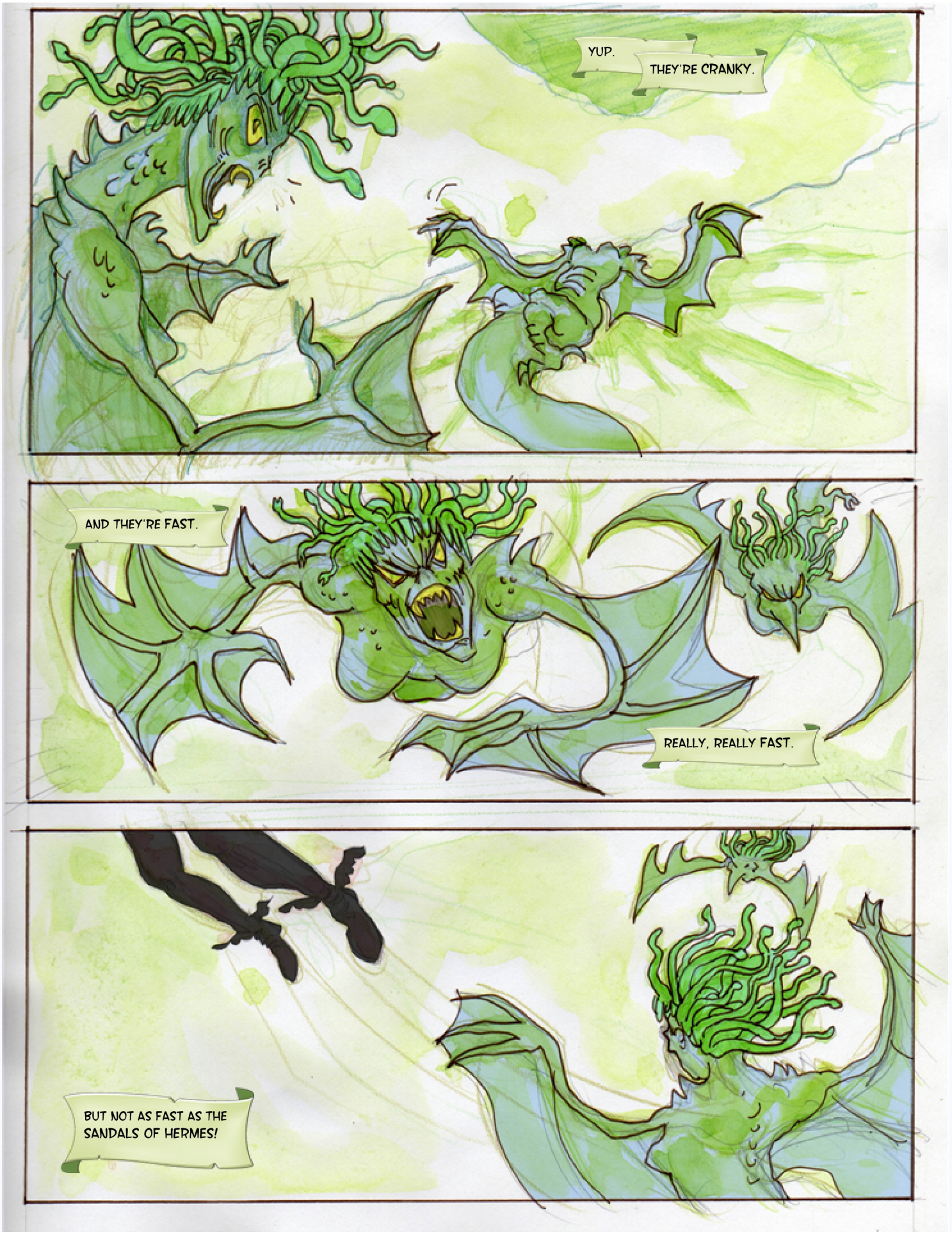
WHY'SCOME?
SEE THAT FROTHING DOWN THERE?
THAT'S WHERE CHARYBDIS HANGS OUT!
THE SEA MONSTER?
YUP! BELCHING OUT WATER THRICE DAILY, MAKING WHIRLPOOLS!
WHOA! EVEN THE ARGONAUTS ARE SCARED OF HER!
SO IS HOMER! SWALLOWED HIM UP AND SPAT HIM OUT LIKE A HUNK OF "BIG LEAGUE CHEW!"
WHAT'S "BIG LEAGUE CHEW"?
NEVER MIND! THERE'S THE CAVE!

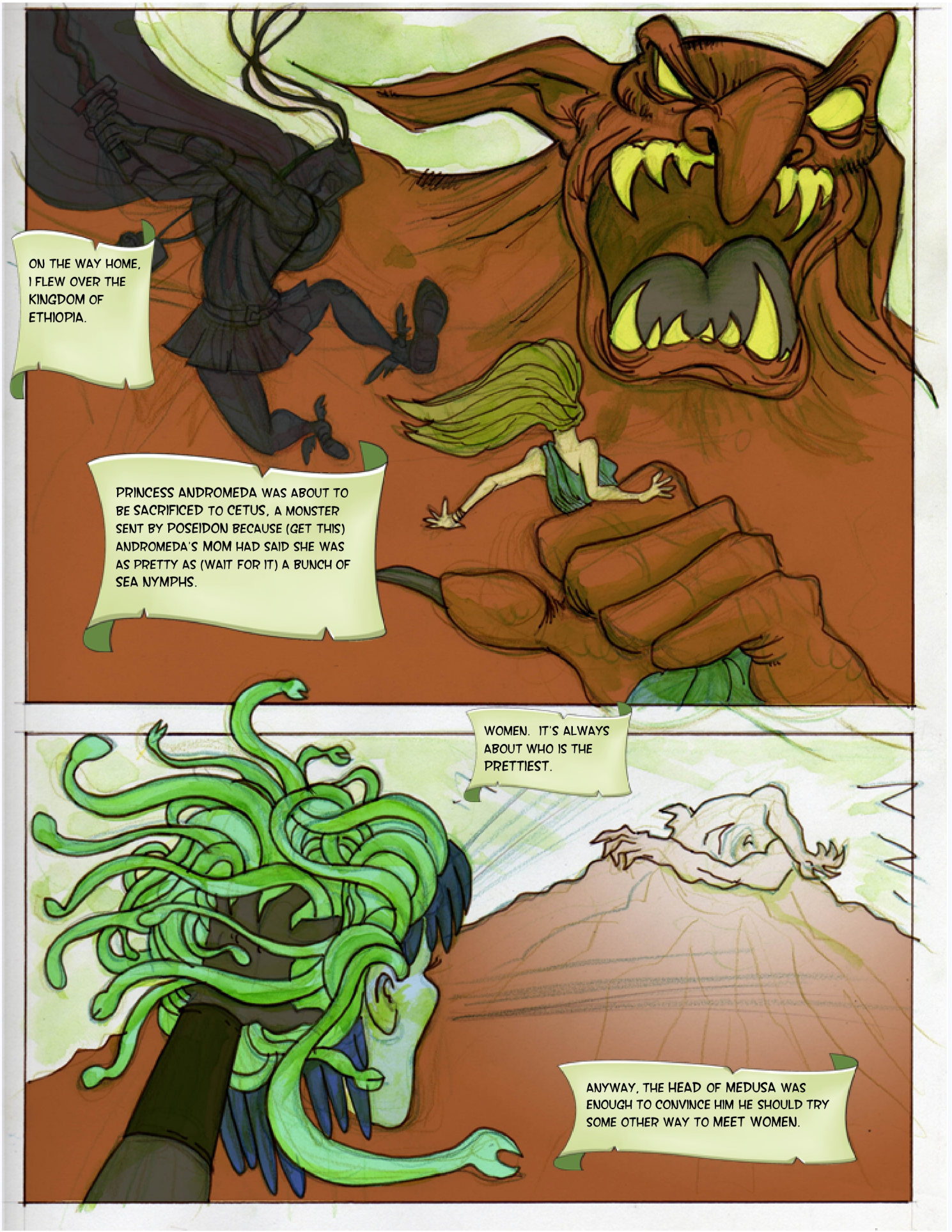

REY, THERE ARE THREE OF THEM!
WHY ARE THERE THREE OF THEM?
THAT'S MEDUSA AND HER TWO OLDER SISTERS, STHENO AND EURYALE!
NO ONE SAID ANYTHING ABOUT THERE BEING THREE OF THEM!
YOU'LL BE FINE. MEDUSA'S THE YOUNGEST.
AND UNLIKE HER SISTERS, SHE'S MORTAL.
OH, GOOD.
SO ONLY TWO OF THE MONSTERS I'M LOOKING AT CAN'T BE KILLED.


I'LL USE THE SHIELD AS A MIRROR!
THIS WAY, I CAN KEEP AN EYE ON HER WITHOUT GETTING HER EVIL EYE!
PER, WATCH OUT!
THOSE SNAKES HAVE SEEN YOU!
WELL, THAT'S NOT FAIR!
IF SHE'S ASLEEP, THE SNAKES SHOULD BE ASLEEP.
SERIOUSLY, WHY WOULD HER HAIR BE AWAKE IF SHE'S ASLEEP?

WOMEN.
IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT THE HAIR FOR WOMEN.
AND SHE'S GOT ATTITUDE TO SPARE.
BUT I HAVE A NICE, SHINY, SHARP SWORD.
I'M NOT GONNA LIE.
THAT WAS GROSS.

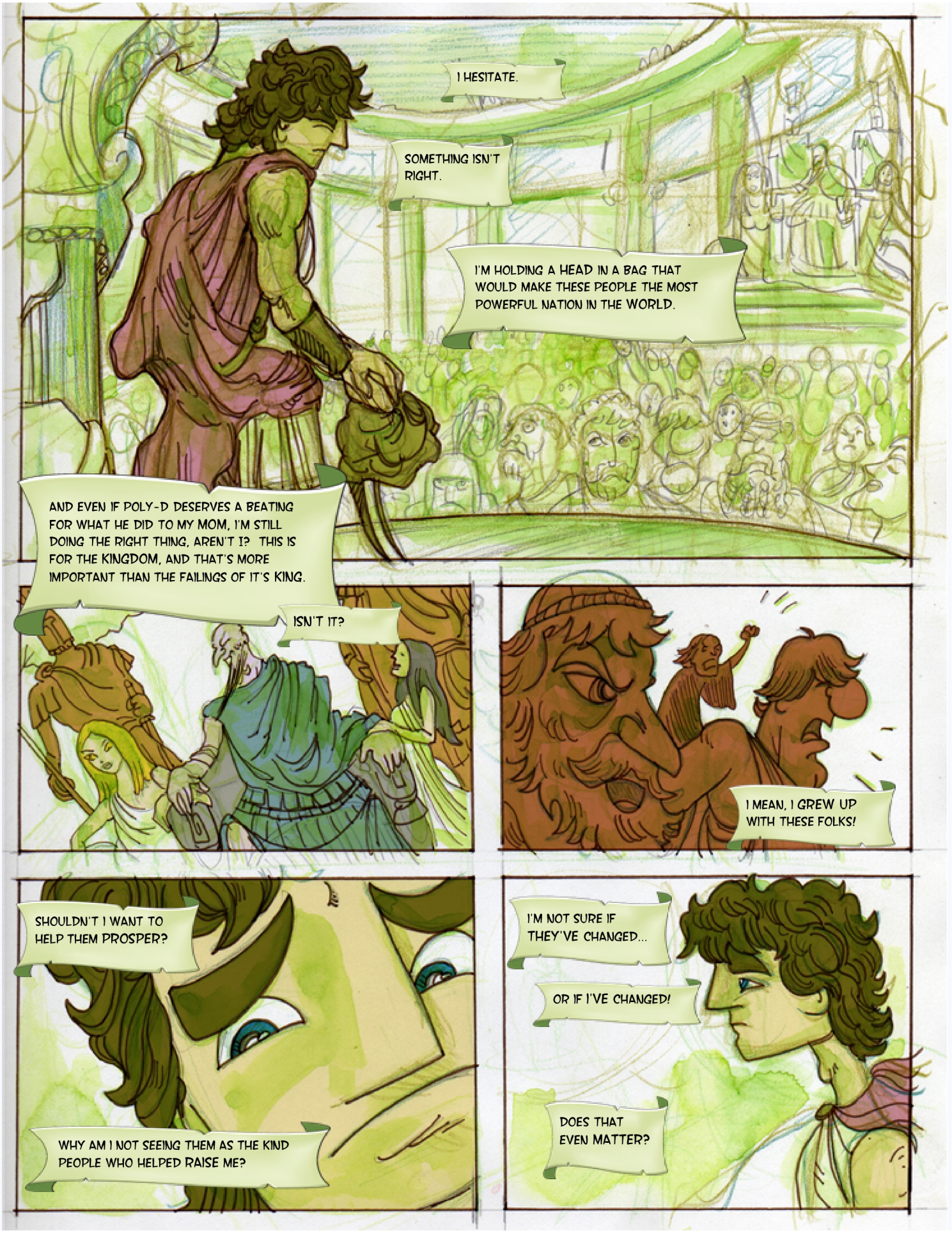

YOU DID IT, PER!
I PUT HER HEAD IN THE KIBISIS.
AND THAT'S THE LAST THING I'M PUTTING IN THERE!
HADES OWES ME FIVE BUCKS!
I WAS GONNA SAVE IT AS A LUNCH SACK, BUT NOW THAT I'VE PUT A HEAD IN THERE...
UH-OH.
REY, I THINK HER SISTERS ARE WAKING UP!
AND THEY LOOK CRANKY!


YUP.
THEY'RE CRANKY.
AND THEY'RE FAST.
REALLY, REALLY FAST.
BUT NOT AS FAST AS THE SANDALS OF HERMES!


ON THE WAY HOME, I FLEW OVER THE KINGDOM OF ETHIOPIA.
PRINCESS ANDROMEDA WAS ABOUT TO BE SACRIFICED TO CETUS, A MONSTER SENT BY POSEIDON BECAUSE (GET THIS) ANDROMEDA'S MOM HAD SAID SHE WAS AS PRETTY AS (WAIT FOR IT) A BUNCH OF SEA NYMPHS.
WOMEN. IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT WHO IS THE PRETTIEST.
ANYWAY, THE HEAD OF MEDUSA WAS ENOUGH TO CONVINCE HIM HE SHOULD TRY SOME OTHER WAY TO MEET WOMEN.

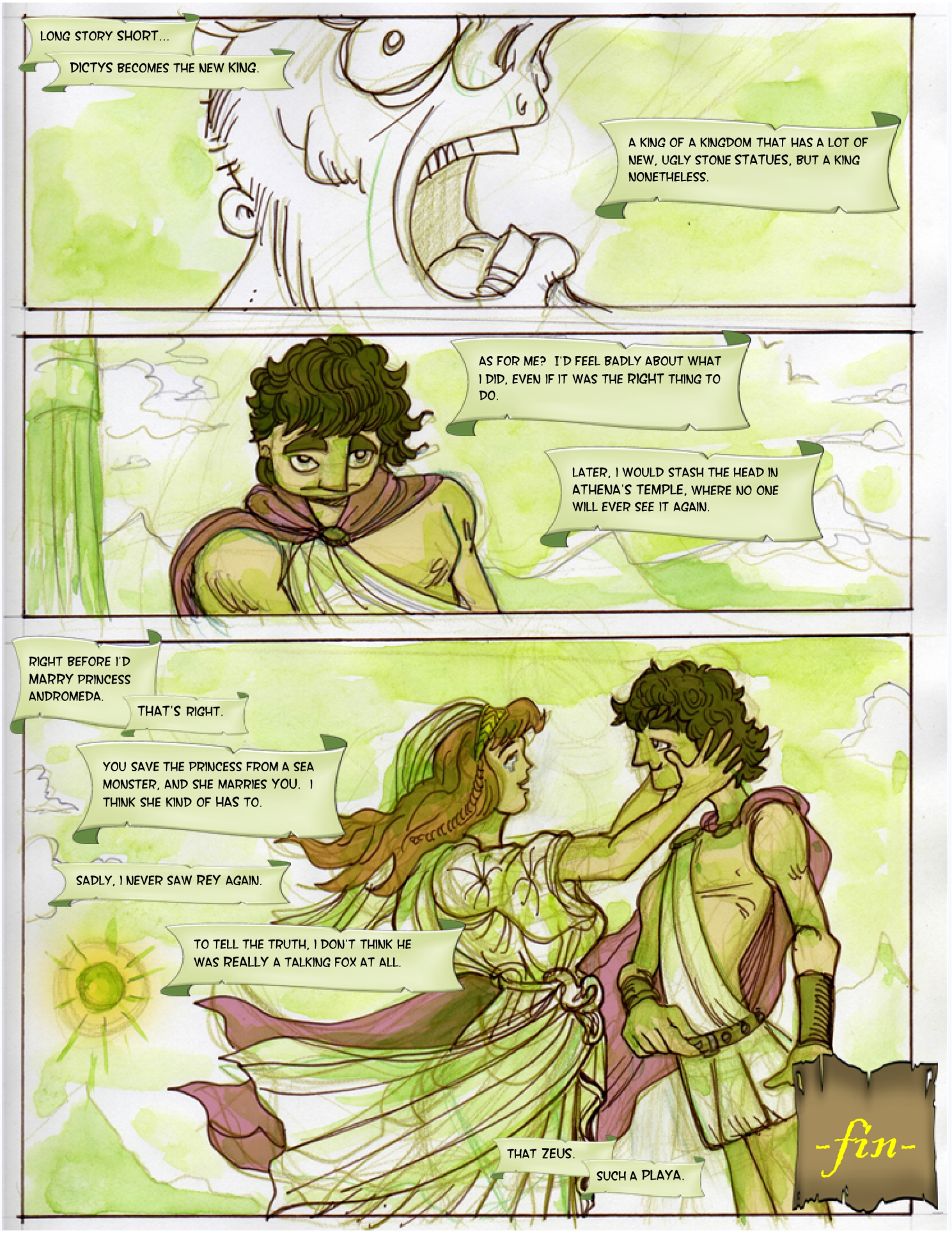
I BROUGHT THE PRINCESS BACK WITH ME.
IT TURNS OUT SHE WAS ENGAGED TO SOME GUY, BUT I'M THE ONE WHO RESCUED HER FROM THE SEA MONSTER AND WHATNOT, SOOOOOOO....
BUT FIRST THINGS FIRST.
PERSEUS! GET OUT OF HERE, SON!
MOM?
POLY-D? WHAT'S GOING ON?
OH, YOUR MOTHER MISREAD MY INTENTIONS, AND NOW DICTYS HAS HER GUARDED.
AS IF ANYONE NEEDED PROTECTION FROM THEIR DEAR KING!

WHAT DID YOU DO TO MY MOM?
ONE KISS, MY DEAR BOY!
ALL I WANTED WAS ONE KISS!
THINKS SHE HAS LIPS OF GOLD, THAT ONE!
TOO GOOD FOR A MONARCH!
NOW, THEN.
I BELIEVE YOU HAVE SOMETHING FOR ME?
OH, I MOST CERTAINLY DO.
THEY MAKE A BIG DEAL OUT OF IT WHEN A KING GETS A GIFT.
TRUMPETS BLARE...
THE CROWD ROARS...
THERE'S NOT A LOT FOR ENTERTAINMENT, SO WE TAKE WHAT WE CAN GET.


I HESITATE.
SOMETHING ISN'T RIGHT.
I'M HOLDING A HEAD IN A BAG THAT WOULD MAKE THESE PEOPLE THE MOST POWERFUL NATION IN THE WORLD.
AND EVEN IF POLY-D DESERVES A BEATING FOR WHAT HE DID TO MY MOM, I'M STILL DOING THE RIGHT THING, AREN'T I? THIS IS FOR THE KINGDOM, AND THAT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE FAILINGS OF IT'S KING.
ISN'T IT?
I MEAN, I GREW UP WITH THESE FOLKS!
SHOULDN'T I WANT TO HELP THEM PROSPER?
WHY AM I NOT SEEING THEM AS THE KIND PEOPLE WHO HELPED RAISE ME?
I'M NOT SURE IF THEY'VE CHANGED...
OR IF I'VE CHANGED!
DOES THAT EVEN MATTER?

THESE PEOPLE SEE THAT THEY HAVE SOME POWER, AND NOW THEY'RE ITCHING FOR WAR.
THEY WANT TO TAKE THIS HEAD, AND PUT IT ON A SPEAR, AND USE IT TO TURN ANYONE WHO DEFIES THEM INTO STONE.
OLD MEN...WOMEN... KIDS... ANYONE.
I HEAR THEM URGING POLY-D TO MAKE ME GIVE HIM THE HEAD.
POLY-D MAKES A BIG SHOW OF DEMANDING THE HEAD.
THE PEOPLE LIKE IT WHEN WE MAKE A BIG PRODUCTION OUT OF EVERYTHING.
THIS SAYING WAS ALREADY PRETTY OLD, EVEN IN MY TIME...
... BUT IT'S ALWAYS BEEN TRUE:

"BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR."


LONG STORY SHORT...
DICTYS BECOMES THE NEW KING.
A KING OF A KINGDOM THAT HAS A LOT OF NEW, UGLY STONE STATUES, BUT A KING NONETHELESS.
AS FOR ME? I'D FEEL BADLY ABOUT WHAT I DID, EVEN IF IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.
LATER, I WOULD STASH THE HEAD IN ATHENA'S TEMPLE, WHERE NO ONE WILL EVER SEE IT AGAIN.
RIGHT BEFORE I'D MARRY PRINCESS ANDROMEDA.
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU SAVE THE PRINCESS FROM A SEA MONSTER, AND SHE MARRIES YOU. I THINK SHE KIND OF HAS TO.
SADLY, I NEVER SAW REY AGAIN.
TO TELL THE TRUTH, I DON'T THINK HE WAS REALLY A TALKING FOX AT ALL.
THAT ZEUS.
SUCH A PLAYA.
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